electoral rolls in due course. Presently the national average of issuance of EPIC is 69.66%.

Modernisation of Major Ports

1358. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign core vessels prefer to use Colombo, Singapore or Dubai rather than Indian ports in view of clean ports and pollution free waters around the ports; and

(b) if so, the measures proposed to develop and modernize the major ports to attract growth in traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) and (b) Development and modernisation of major ports is an on-going process keeping in view the demands of maritime trade. The premise that foreign core (mainline) vessels prefer to use Colombo, Singapore or Dubai rather than Indian ports in view of clean ports and pollution free waters around the ports is not correct. However, at present, Indian origin/bound container traffic is predominantly transhipped though ports in neighbouring countires which results in delays and raises transaction cost for India's international trade. In order to encourage direct shipment of cargo through Indian ports, it has been decided to develop a hub port each on the East and West coasts of India, at chennai and Jawaharal Nehru Ports, respectively. Further, it has been decided to develop an international container transhipment terminal at Vallarpadam, Cochin.

Guidelines for Ship Breaking

1359. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has recently given a significant ruling on dumping of hazardous wastes and formulation of guidelines for ship breaking;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and